

Better Schools for All Students:

DCPS' Consolidation and Reorganization Plan



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

January 2013

January 17, 2013

Dear DCPS Community:

Proposals to consolidate schools evoke strong reactions. They can be disruptive and unsettling to students, parents, community members, and school staff. They can also generate an inspiring amount of community creativity. And that has happened in the past two months.

We heard from representatives from schools in every ward. We heard about the hopes and disappointments of parents, students, families, community members, and staff. You brought forward ideas for improving our schools and concerns about inadequate school programs and facilities. But most of all, you came forward with your desire to work together to make our school system as strong as possible, and for that, we thank you.

We took all the feedback that we heard very seriously. We captured thousands of remarks through our four public hearings. We heard from hundreds more through our website, office hours, and individual meetings. We met with ANC members, city council members, Local School Advisory Teams, and PTAs. We reviewed dozens of proposals for modifying our plan and improving our schools. Throughout the many conversations we had, a few themes resonated across the city.

- All of our schools should offer students the same opportunities for robust programming.
- Our children must be safe in school and as they travel to and from school.
- We must use all of our resources effectively so that we can support the community now and in the future. This includes better coordination with public charter schools.

Our final plan responds to these themes. It also reminds us of opportunities and challenges before us as the city's largest public school system. The plan summarizes our outreach and feedback efforts. It includes our final consolidation plan, the rationale for changes, and our next steps moving forward.

This is not the end of our engagement, but the beginning of a new partnership. The energy and innovation brought to the school consolidation discussion now must be channeled to support improved learning opportunities for our children.

We are DCPS, and we can do this together.

Sincerely,



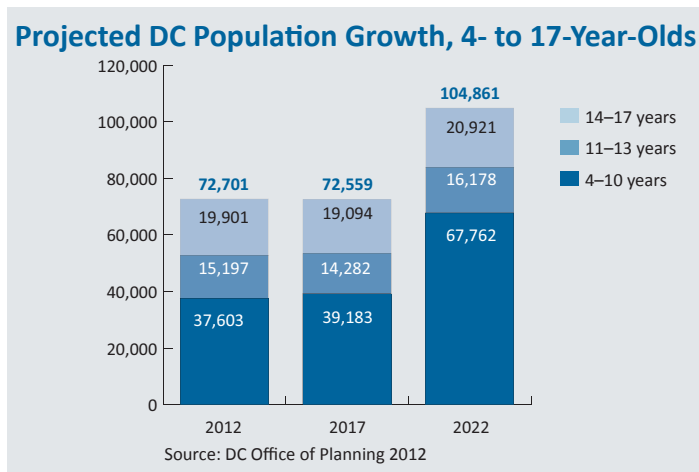
Kaya Henderson
Chancellor

Why We Must Act

Our purpose, as articulated in [A Capital Commitment](#), is to ensure that every DCPS school provides a world-class education that prepares all students, regardless of background or circumstance, for success in college, career, and life.

Our Assets

DCPS is well positioned to deliver on this promise to meet the needs of our changing city. In fact, we have already taken many important steps toward fulfilling our commitment. We have made strategic investments in effective teachers, principals, support staff, and facilities in schools throughout the District. We have increased student performance and strengthened our commitment to help *all* children achieve academic success. The highest-performing schools in the city are DCPS schools, and we offer many great neighborhood options for young families. We have schools in every ward and community, with families and students from economically, racially, and culturally diverse backgrounds. We also have the infrastructure to support long-term enrollment growth. Long term, these assets are especially important given that the city is projected to have up to 30,000 more 4- to 17-year-olds by 2022.



Our Challenges

Despite our many assets and investments, to prepare our students for success, we must use all of our resources — our staff, our funds, and our facilities — more wisely. We cannot do this with the current organization of our schools. Too many of our schools are under-enrolled. As a result, we spend too much on maintaining small schools rather than investing in quality programs for students. There is a significant relationship between the number of schools we have, staffing, and funding. By reducing the number of facilities, we can improve the programs we offer and the quality of education we provide to students across the city.

Having enough staff to offer excellent and equitable programming. Under-enrolled schools do not allow our staff to

work collaboratively, do not give our students access to the staffing resources and academic and extracurricular programs they need, limit flexibility on class sizes and student grouping, and minimize the impact of our highly effective teachers. Because DCPS currently supports too many under-enrolled schools, many schools do not have enough staff to offer the range of programs that students deserve, such as art, music, world/foreign languages, physical education, and library services.

Spending funds effectively. Because DCPS has many under-enrolled schools that are more expensive to support, DCPS invests more in maintaining these schools when we would prefer to invest more in programs to help low-performing students, increase opportunities for advanced learners, and develop specialized programs to engage students. Because every school requires some basic administrative and maintenance support, DCPS spends disproportionately high sums on non-instructional staff in small schools.

Having the right number of facilities to support community needs — now and in the future. Schools with fewer than 350 students require additional per-pupil funding to offer a full range of services. Sixty-four percent of DCPS elementary schools have fewer than 350 students. The DC population of 4- to 17-year-olds declined 15,245 between 2000 and 2010, while the charter school enrollment increased. Both are major reasons why we have so many buildings that are so under-utilized. Our use of facilities must reflect current demographic and competitive realities, while being flexible enough to accommodate future growth.

Our Original Proposal

In response to these circumstances and after a significant amount of analysis, DCPS released a proposal in November 2012 to consolidate 20 schools across six wards. We considered four factors in selecting schools to recommend for consolidation:

1. Student enrollment and population changes in the community;
2. Building utilization rates;
3. The building condition and its modernization status; and
4. The availability of “receiving schools” to offer students an improved experience.

We crafted our proposal to ensure that:

- All schools can offer robust programming;
- Our portfolio of schools will be flexible and ready to respond to population growth and shifts with a mix of strong neighborhood schools and out-of-boundary options; and
- Our school district will be financially stable and able to direct funds to our highest priorities.

Listening to the Community

In November 2012, we released our proposed school consolidation and reorganization plan to the public to gain insights, collect ideas, and understand concerns from parents, community members, and partners. We shared our data, our information, and our assumptions. And we listened closely.

For six weeks following the release of the proposal, the DCPS Office of Family and Public Engagement managed a listening tour to hear feedback. The Chancellor and nearly 100 citizens testified at two City Council hearings. We organized

four ward-based public meetings that attracted nearly 800 participants. We held office hours with Advisory Neighborhood Commissioners (ANCs) and citizens. We hosted group meetings, conference calls, webinars and individual consultations with countless parents, partners, and representative stakeholders.

DCPS made considerable efforts to ensure that information about the proposal was readily accessible to community members through traditional and social media platforms.

Listening Tour

- ➔ 2 City Council hearings
- ➔ Calls and office hours for Advisory Neighborhood Commissioners of affected schools
- ➔ Ward-based community meetings:
 - Wards 1–4, 6: 248 attendees
 - Ward 5: 132 attendees
 - Ward 7: 231 attendees
 - Ward 8: 169 attendees
- ➔ Meetings with Education Councils in Wards 5, 7, and 8
- ➔ Public office hours
- ➔ Meetings with a wide range of stakeholder groups such as:
 - City Council members and staff
 - Major nonprofit and corporate partners of affected schools
 - Members of the faith community
 - PTAs and parent groups
 - State Board of Education members
 - State Advisory Panel on Special Education
 - U.S. Department of Education Staff
 - Washington Teachers Union and teachers
 - Council for School Officers, Teamsters, and AFSCME



To reach people who could not otherwise attend a public meeting, we launched an online forum, engageDCPS.org, which offered a central repository of information as well as a means of virtual engagement. Individuals posted their views and shared their ideas, suggestions, and proposals for everyone to review and weigh in on.

Major Themes

Five issues stood out and our revised plan addresses these issues:

- Equity and quality programming;
- Cost savings;
- Safety and walkability;
- Facility planning and impact of charter schools; and
- Transitions of students to new schools.

Our Revised Plan

This plan will help us meet the goals of our strategic plan (*A Capital Commitment*) while addressing the community's concerns in three primary ways. It will help ensure that:

- All schools can offer robust programming, improving both equity and excellence.
- We manage the transitions for students in the schools that will be affected in the 2013–14 school year. Ensuring that students can safely travel to and from school is a top priority.
- And longer term, we use all of our resources (including facilities) effectively and are poised to support the needs of our community now and in years to come.

The table on the following pages compares our original proposal to this final plan, providing rationales for our decisions in each case.

"I'm sure younger students [at FSEC] will benefit from sharing their building with such high-performing high school students [from SWW]."

"Safety is a huge issue around transportation to consolidated schools."

"I'd like to see the buildings turned into community colleges, homeless shelters, classrooms for adult learning and make buildings available to community based resource centers (keep life in these buildings)."

"However this works, we want to stay with our kids."

"We should make sure there's a high concentration of kids in a school with the most resources."

"Garrison has been doing everything that DCPS wants from its parents and community."

"Smothers Elementary is an excellent school; the kids there are really learning."

A summary of all comments, including school-specific concerns, can be found at <http://dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/crfeedback>.

Consolidation and Reorganization Plan

SCHOOL	ORIGINAL PROPOSAL	FINAL PLAN	RATIONALE FOR CHANGE/PROGRAMMATIC IMPROVEMENTS
WARD 1			
Shaw MS	Close and consolidate into Cardozo. Cardozo would serve grades 6–12.	No change	Consolidating Shaw MS into Cardozo HS allows students to access robust secondary school programming and a newly modernized state-of-the-art building. DCPS will work with the Shaw MS community and its feeder schools at the elementary and high school ends to ensure that a high-quality future for Shaw MS's program, location, and facility is more fully defined. We know from successful 6–12 programs all across the world that we can design the school to minimize some of the safety concerns raised by the community.
WARD 2			
Francis Stevens EC	Close and consolidate into Marie Reed and Hardy.	Merge with School Without Walls (SWW) to serve PS–12.	Francis Stevens (FS) EC is under-enrolled and under-utilizing its building. However, DCPS has little school capacity in Ward 2 and must retain this building to be prepared to respond to future child population growth in this part of the city. Merging FS with SWW enables SWW to expand its grades and manage a neighborhood/boundary education campus at the FS building. Current FS students would automatically be enrolled in the school for next year. This supports the city's goal to increase the number of high-quality public school seats. Providing SWW with another building will also allow it to maximize all available space to expand the number of high school seats.
Garrison ES	Close and consolidate into Seaton.	Keep open.	New data from the DC Office of Planning indicate that the neighborhood clusters that include Garrison ES and Seaton ES are both projected to grow more quickly and substantially than initial reports. Due to the new data, the commitment made by the school to capture these families, and the concern that there is not ample space to consolidate at Seaton, Garrison will remain open. To maximize the space and capture new students, DCPS will open new early childhood and special education classrooms at Garrison ES.
WARD 4			
MacFarland MS	Close and consolidate into Roosevelt, making it 6–12.	Close and consolidate with nearby PK–8 schools.	Students from MacFarland MS will transition to their in-boundary education campus school of right or to Raymond EC instead of consolidating with Roosevelt HS. Powell ES students will feed to Columbia Heights EC, and Barnard ES students will feed to West EC or Truesdell EC. Self-contained special education classrooms will move to Takoma EC and LaSalle-Backus EC.
WARD 5			
Marshall ES	Close and consolidate into Langdon, with transportation.	No change	There are too few elementary-age students living in the Marshall ES boundary to sustain a school. DCPS recognizes that there are thoroughfares that could pose problems for students to reach Langdon EC. DCPS is committed to provide transportation to students from Marshall ES to Langdon EC. Additionally, we will retain the Marshall ES building in the inventory should we need to re-open it.
Spingarn HS	Close and reassign to neighborhood high schools.	No change	For several years, the community has voiced an interest in expanding the vocational programming at DCPS. We plan to leverage the Spingarn HS site to establish a career and technical education hub for secondary school students with a strong focus on transportation careers. We acknowledge the unique circumstances and needs that the Spingarn HS students have when considering a transition to another school and will work closely with this community to ensure proper placement of students in DCPS high schools.
WARD 7			
Davis ES	Close and consolidate into CW Harris.	Close and consolidate into Plummer, with transportation.	Davis ES is a low-enrolled school in close proximity to a number of other low-enrollment schools, largely because of child population decline. The original recommendation to consolidate with CW Harris ES has been changed to respond to family concerns related to access to CW Harris ES. Instead, the Davis ES students will be consolidated with Plummer ES, a higher-performing school, since Smothers ES will remain open. DCPS is committed to provide transportation to students from Davis ES to Plummer ES.
Kenilworth ES	Close and consolidate into Houston, with transportation.	Close and consolidate into Thomas and Houston, with transportation to Thomas, if necessary.	The low numbers of school-age population continue to be the driving factor behind the plan to consolidate the school. The two biggest concerns voiced by the community were the impact of the DC Promise Neighborhood Initiative (DCPNI) and the interest in going to Thomas ES. We met with the DCPNI team and have agreed to work together to ensure that we leverage the site to support the redevelopment goals of this community, including a recreation center through the Department of Recreation. DCPS is committed to provide transportation to students from Kenilworth ES to Thomas ES. We plan to retain the building in our inventory so that when there is sufficient demand we can reopen the school.

SCHOOL	ORIGINAL PROPOSAL	FINAL PLAN	RATIONALE FOR CHANGE/PROGRAMMATIC IMPROVEMENTS
Ron Brown MS	Close and consolidate into Kelly Miller	No change	Ron Brown MS students and rising 6th graders from Ron Brown MS feeder schools will be assigned to Kelly Miller MS. The nine self-contained special education classrooms will be relocated to Johnson MS, Hart MS, Jefferson MS, and Whittier EC. The Office of Special Education will provide individual case management services to ensure proper placement of the special education students.
Smothers ES	Close and consolidate into Aiton and Plummer.	Keep open.	While Smothers ES enrollment falls below 350, the school has seen steady enrollment growth over the last few years. Unlike the other schools in the proposal, Smothers ES has a healthy utilization rate. DCPS will keep Smothers ES open, support it with its potential for growth, and encourage the continued community support and commitment to high-quality education.
Winston EC	Close and consolidate into Stanton and Kramer.	Close and consolidate into Stanton, Kramer, and Johnson.	Winston EC is part of a feeder pattern of schools with high excess capacity, and the facility is very poorly designed and very oversized for the enrollment. Stanton ES is showing excellent gains, and Kramer MS is part of an innovative reform initiative to fully integrate technology and instruction. Students will also be given the opportunity to attend Johnson MS, given its proximity to Winston EC.
WARD 8			
Ferebee-Hope ES	Close and consolidate into Hendley.	No change	We continue to have excess building capacity in this area. Consolidating Ferebee-Hope ES with Hendley ES will help ensure that these students have access to robust programming. The recreation center will remain open and will continue to serve the community. We also look forward to working with the DC Housing Authority in its efforts to better serve neighborhood families — exploring ways they can use the building, along with DPR, to maintain the site as a community hub.
Johnson MS	Close and consolidate into Hart.	Keep open.	The safety concerns that could undermine our goal to offer a better program and environment for our students compelled us to keep Johnson open. Although Johnson MS has low enrollment, DCPS will work with the school community to identify ways to grow the enrollment, strengthen the program, and increase utilization of the space.
Malcolm X ES	Close and consolidate into Turner.	Keep open.	DCPS will pilot an innovative partnership at Malcolm X ES with a high-performing charter school serving Ward 8 students. Through this merger, DCPS will expand the number of high-quality seats in Ward 8, while ensuring the right to attend a neighborhood school.
MC Terrell ES	Close and consolidate into ML King.	No change	Families expressed concern about walkability from Terrell ES to King ES. King ES is less than a half of a mile from Terrell ES with no major streets to cross that would pose safety concerns. DCPS will work closely with the community and our agency partners to identify safe passages for families. The Parent Resource Center will also close, due to the low participation rate by families. The Office of Family and Public Engagement will work to ensure that opportunities for meaningful parent engagement continue at King ES and other nearby schools.
SPECIAL EDUCATION AND ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION			
Choice at Hamilton	Relocate to Cardozo.	Relocate to Emery.	With Cardozo HS moving into its newly modernized facility and expanding to serve the Shaw MS students, DCPS is concerned about co-locating another program in the building. Relocating the program to Emery, currently used as training space, will also maximize use of that building.
Mamie D. Lee	Relocate to River Terrace in August 2014.	No change	In an effort to serve students closer to home and increase efficiencies, through better utilizing our space and decreasing our transportation costs, DCPS will work with the Sharpe Health and Mamie D. Lee communities over the next 18 months to engage in the facility modernization and program planning process for River Terrace.
Sharpe Health	Relocate to River Terrace in August 2014.	No change	
Prospect LC	Close and reassign to neighborhood high schools.	No change	DCPS believes it is necessary to assign the students from Prospect LC to newly developed self-contained learning disabilities classrooms at Garrison ES, Jefferson Academy MS, and Eastern HS. The Office of Special Education will provide individual case management services to ensure the proper placement of each and every student.
Spingarn STAY	Close and reassign to other STAY programs.	No change	Both Ballou STAY and Roosevelt STAY programs are poised to serve the additional students coming from Spingarn STAY. DCPS is also exploring the option to expand our partnership with UDC Community College to serve additional adult students.

Final plan changed from original proposal.

Five Key Priorities

In response to what we heard from the community, our immediate priority is to ease the transition for the affected students, families, and staff, including safety and transportation issues. At the same time, we will invest savings from the consolidations to continue strengthening high-quality programs — not just in the “receiving” schools but also in neighborhoods across the city. And we will continue working closely with the public to manage the re-use of our facilities for the benefit of students and the community.

Expand Existing High-Quality Programs

Public Input: *DCPS stakeholders want more high-quality and specialized programming, including foreign language options, immersion programs, and career and technical education options in neighborhood schools to become more competitive with charter schools. Parents also want after-school programs and partnerships expanded to provide more robust offerings before, during, and after the school day. They want more magnet programs.*

In addition to the program improvements made possible by consolidating schools, DCPS also will add seats at existing in-demand schools at every level.

Expanding Quality Seats	
School-within-a-School	Grow from PK–1 to 5th grade by relocating to the Prospect LC building.
Capitol Hill Montessori at Logan	Change from PK–5 to PK–8 and add additional early childhood classrooms in 2013–14 school year.
McKinley MS	Open a new middle school in August 2013 with more than 300 seats that is focused on science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM).
Benjamin Banneker HS	Expand size of incoming 9th grade by nearly 50 percent.
School Without Walls	Expand the size of the 9th grade class.

Re-Invest Cost Savings

Public Input: *Stakeholders questioned our rationale that continuing to operate too many under-enrolled schools is too costly and an inefficient use of resources. Instead of consolidating schools, many offered alternative suggestions to share space and co-locate with nonprofits, other District agencies, and/or community-based organizations in the under-utilized buildings.*

DCPS anticipates saving approximately \$19.5 million because of consolidating schools. Of these savings, \$11 million will be re-invested in receiving schools. The remaining \$8.5 million, plus

additional savings from reductions to central office, will support transition costs and robust programming in all schools. DCPS will explore innovative service delivery methods to maximize impact, such as art hubs or shared foreign language teachers.

The savings reflects personnel costs, which are reduced but not eliminated when two schools are consolidated. Other personnel costs are moved to the receiving school to support the larger student enrollment after consolidation. For example, those receiving schools will need additional funds to support the new staff positions they need to serve their larger student body. This consolidation will also enable schools to provide better academic programs, such as library services.

First, we will invest the remaining funds in DCPS schools on an ongoing basis to support and strengthen our academic programs, particularly core reading programs, world language programs, and library and media services. For instance, we used the savings from the 2008 consolidations over the past five years to ensure that all students had art, music, and physical education — a \$15 million investment.

Second, we will incur many costs to secure, preserve, and store District assets and school memorabilia, as well as to move materials, equipment, and furniture to support other DCPS schools. In most cases, these are one-time costs incurred in the months immediately after the consolidation leading into the new school year. We will work with other city agencies to reduce these costs whenever possible.

Finally, we will incur transportation costs when students cannot safely travel from a consolidated to a receiving school. For an isolated school such as Marshall Elementary, transportation is critical. Savings derived from the closing will be used to support bus transportation for eligible schools. We also will provide additional funding to designated receiving schools to support the influx of new students and staff. We will ensure that the communities of the consolidating and receiving schools have the resources they need.

We will begin to re-invest these savings into our schools in FY 14 and continue the investment in future years. The investment will be reflected in individual school budgets that school communities will begin to develop in the coming weeks. A school’s total budget will ultimately reflect the number of students it serves, the needs of its students (including special education and English language learner services), and any inflation or cost of living we will incur in FY 14.

Depending on decisions regarding building re-use, DCPS also may achieve savings in fixed costs (utilities) once the buildings are transferred out of the DCPS building inventory. Those additional savings are not included in the savings projected at this time.

Estimated Consolidation Savings by School		Estimated New Costs at Receiving Schools	
Consolidating School Name	Savings	Receiving School(s) Name	New Costs
Davis ES	\$1,514,116	Plummer ES	\$1,292,457
Ferebee-Hope ES	\$1,926,549	Hendley ES	\$1,180,272
Kenilworth ES	\$1,537,965	Thomas ES	\$435,735
		Houston ES	\$821,663
MC Terrell ES	\$1,835,575	King ES	\$832,960
MacFarland MS	\$1,456,429	Brightwood EC/Truesdell EC/West EC/Raymond EC/Whittier EC	\$827,353
Marshall ES	\$1,803,893	Langdon EC	\$414,750
Ron Brown MS	\$1,917,251	Kelly Miller MS	\$886,249
Shaw MS	\$1,176,594	Cardozo HS	\$758,268
Spingarn HS	\$3,200,172	Dunbar HS	\$543,759
		Eastern HS	\$181,041
		Woodson HS	\$392,296
Spingarn STAY	\$795,295	Ballou STAY	\$219,770
		Roosevelt STAY	\$213,525
Winston EC	\$2,285,651	Johnson Middle	\$340,125
		Kramer MS	\$349,856
		Stanton ES	\$1,237,602
Total Consolidation Savings	\$19,449,490	Total New Costs at Receiving Schools	\$10,927,681
Savings Total \$8,521,809			

(Excludes possible savings/costs attributed to services for English language learner or special needs students, fixed costs, and the enrollment at receiving schools. Savings will be used to offset costs associated with the closing, including transportation, and to re-invest in academic programs.)

Ensure Safety and Walkability

Public Input: Ensuring student safety and having schools within walking distance were particular transition concerns. DCPS' goal is to have an excellent school in every community where parents can safely send their children. We also know that the cost of public transportation is a challenge for many families who may have to pay more because of different routes to school. Participants expressed concern about the adjustment for students, particularly those with disabilities who have been "travel trained" for their existing school. Plus, an increase in travel time and cost may strain families of limited means and increase truancy.

The revised plan addresses safety in several ways. In addition to making changes to the final list of consolidated schools, DCPS will work with consolidated schools, their communities, and local and district agencies to develop and implement detailed plans to address concerns related to merging school communities.

A top priority is to establish safe walking routes for students. However, in some cases we may need to provide busing to ensure that students can reach school in a safe and timely manner. We are

committed to busing elementary students whose current school is more than a half-mile away from the receiving school. We also will take into account whether elementary students must cross major thoroughfares and/or navigate impediments that inhibit their safe passage. In such cases, DCPS will work with DDOT to provide additional crossing guards or a bus. Transportation options for special education students will be determined based on guidance from the Office of the State Superintendent of Education.

Re-Use Facilities and Address Impact of Charter Schools

Public Input: Many DCPS stakeholders urged us to consider the role of charters in the facilities planning for any consolidated DCPS school. Many expressed concerns about the unchecked growth of poor-performing charter schools east of the river. They want the city to develop a comprehensive education plan that requires both education sectors to work together to offer high-quality educational options for children and use limited resources effectively, equitably, and efficiently. Community members were concerned that vacant DCPS buildings would be turned over to charter schools.

DCPS agrees that it is important to repurpose these facilities as quickly as possible and leverage them to serve community needs. We have gathered many re-use suggestions from a wide array of stakeholders during the community engagement process and would now like to formally engage stakeholders in determining a short- and long-term use for available facilities.

As we contemplate building re-use, it is important to recognize that because of the projected increase in the school-age population (see page 1), DCPS must be prepared to reopen some of our facilities to accommodate future demand. We will continue to work closely with the Office of Planning to assess which communities are growing and where we must adjust our portfolio of schools accordingly.

Also, DCPS understands the need to partner with the charter school community to ensure that our services complement each other as we strive to grow the number of quality academic seats for the District's children. We understand the importance of maintaining neighborhood schools and look forward to engaging the charter sector in a thoughtful re-use plan for unused DCPS buildings.

DCPS already has identified a short- or long-term re-use for the following seven facilities that will be vacated as a result of the final consolidation plan.

- ➔ **Kenilworth ES** — To support the recent U.S. Department of Education investment in the DC Promise Neighborhood Initiative (DCPNI), DCPS will maintain the Kenilworth facility in its inventory in the hope of reopening it in the future. In the interim, DCPS is eager to support the community, DCPNI, and the District's Department of Recreation by leasing a portion of the facility to support the initiative's start-up efforts, including expanding recreation services.
- ➔ **MacFarland MS** — The facility will accommodate Roosevelt High School during its two-year modernization process.
- ➔ **Mamie D. Lee and Sharpe Health** — The facilities housing these two programs will remain open through the 2013–14 school year, until the programs are moved to the modernized River Terrace.
- ➔ **Marshall ES** — In response to the Fort Lincoln community, DCPS will explore opportunities with local partners to leverage the building for community use.
- ➔ **Prospect LC** — DCPS will relocate the School-within-a-School to the Prospect facility during summer 2013.
- ➔ **Spingarn HS** — The facility will be used to expand career and technical education programming with a special focus on transportation to better prepare our students for college and careers.

Most immediately, we will continue to engage the community and district agencies in the re-use of the following school buildings:

- ➔ **Davis ES;**
- ➔ **Ferebee-Hope ES;**
- ➔ **Garnet-Patterson MS (former location of Shaw MS);**
- ➔ **Hamilton MS (former location of CHOICE);**
- ➔ **MC Terrell ES;**
- ➔ **Ron Brown MS; and**
- ➔ **Winston EC.**

Stakeholders are encouraged to route your inquiries and ideas about building usage either through the Office of the Chief Operating Officer at officeofthecoo.inquires@dc.gov or engageDCPS.org.

Ease the Transitions

***Public Input:** DCPS stakeholders posed many questions about the plan for transitioning students into newly merged schools. Will the consolidated schools share a name? How will we address existing neighborhood rivalries and tensions? Will teachers and staff from the closing school be retained? Will the receiving school be provided additional resources to support the number of new students? Will existing partnerships, programs, and activities in the school be maintained? How will special needs students be integrated into the school community, particularly where there is a different receiving school for special education students? Parents were also concerned about the feasibility of co-locating middle school students with high school students without more detail about how the school design and scheduling structure would effectively segregate the two school populations.*

DCPS will establish transition committees for each pair of sending and receiving schools. The committees will be assigned a central office Transition Coordinator responsible for supporting the transition and acting as a single point of contact for families, communities, and staff. Transition Coordinators will focus on supporting staff and families in community-building activities and events, while helping with enrollment, logistics, and transportation, among other issues.

Beginning in February and through the first week(s) of school, each school will hold a series of planning meetings to address multiple topics, including student transitions, student safety, special education placements, staff transitions, and all the logistics associated with the consolidation.

Next Steps

DCPS is committed to ensuring that the consolidations and reorganizations will improve school options for our students and families. In the coming months, our immediate priority is to ease the transition for the affected students, families, and staff. At the same time, we will continue to strengthen programs, manage facility use, and invest savings wisely. In addition, we will begin the next phase of community conversations about strengthening our portfolio of schools.

Strengthen DCPS Boundaries, Feeder Patterns, and Enrollment Policies

Although this plan addresses the immediate priorities to strengthen our portfolio of schools for the 2013–14 school year, DCPS has a longer-term opportunity to update boundaries, feeder patterns, and enrollment policies. Our goal is to create more coherent pathways from preschool through high school for the city’s students, whether they choose a neighborhood school or citywide option. DCPS has not systematically re-examined these issues in more than four decades.

DCPS will work with a citizen advisory committee that will examine and make recommendations to the Chancellor on student assignment policies, special admissions, transfers,

and feeder schools. We also will examine ways to improve walkability; advance economic, racial, and cultural diversity in schools; address overcrowding in some schools; and help make it easier for parents to find schools, apply, and enroll their child. The advisory committee will consider approaches that minimize the impact of any changes on current families. Our goal is to develop an updated approach that recognizes the many population shifts that already have occurred — and the new ones on the horizon. Again, the community will have multiple opportunities to review the research and suggest options before DCPS finalizes a plan.

We cannot achieve these goals unless we continue to work together. We will need more of your creative solutions, workable proposals, and innovative ideas. To that end, we will continue to provide multiple opportunities for input through community meetings, office hours, and one-on-ones and online through EngageDCPS.org. Together, we will ensure that every DCPS school provides a world-class education that prepares all our students, regardless of background or circumstance, for success in college, career, and life.





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